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PRESS ADVISORY

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Secretary of Defense William J. Perry will greet the sailors and Marines of the USS Inchon Amphibious Ready Group tomorrow in North Carolina as they return from a deployment off the coast of Haiti.

Secretary Perry will meet informally with Marines and family members of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit at Camp Lejeune, N.C. at about 12:30 p.m. EDT. His visit is open to media coverage. Interested media should contact Major Mark Hughes, II Marine Expeditionary Force Public Affairs officer or Gunnery Sgt. Terri Allen, at (910) 451-5655.

The Secretary will also go aboard USS Inchon (LPH 12) in Morehead City, N.C. before returning to Washington, D.C. tomorrow afternoon.

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
 QUOTED ON CBS-TV PROGRAM, "CBS EVENING NEWS"
 AUGUST 16, 1994

RATHER: Guantanamo is just one of many spots around the globe where the U.S. military is on call. But is U.S. military readiness to fight suffering, with American forces being asked to do more and more with fewer people and resources? Case in point: the U.S. Marines, who finally came home to Camp Lejeune today.

CBS News national security correspondent David Martin was with them.

DAVID MARTIN: For these Marines, that land up ahead is a rare sight.

MARINE: Finally home.

MARTIN: Their home base in North Carolina.

COLONEL MARTIN BERNDT [USMC]: They deployed on the 6th of January and headed right into Somalia.

MARTIN: This Marine unit executed the final pullout of American troops from Somalia and returned home. Ten days later it was ordered out again, this time to Haiti, caught in the crunch between decreasing forces and increasing missions.

ADMIRAL HENRY MAUZ [Commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet]: As our force structure has gotten small, probably too small, and as our operational tempo increases, something has to give.

MARTIN: The first thing to give is people. Family separation hurts morale and drives people out of the service. The next thing to go is readiness. With Haiti costing the Atlantic Fleet \$20 million a month:

ADMIRAL MAUZ: We're going to have to tie up ships and park airplanes, and we have to do that this year in substantial numbers.

MARTIN: Right now military readiness is rated acceptable. But there are enough warning signs that the armed forces are being asked to do too much with too little, that a panel of retired admirals and generals recently warned the Secretary of Defense the U.S. could slip back into the hollow Army days of the 1970s.

Defense Secretary Perry knows readiness is his number one problem. But when he visited the Marines today in North Carolina, he couldn't make the promise they wanted to hear.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM PERRY: I would like to have promised them that their next big deployment wouldn't occur till December '95. But the fact is, all I can promise them is that that's what the plan is.

MARTIN: If there is another crisis, this Marine may have to break his promise.

WOMAN [sobbing]: Tell me you're not going to leave for a while.

MARINE: I know. I won't. Be the last time for a long time.

MARTIN: David Martin, CBS News, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.